

VZCZCXRO8985
PP RUEHDE RUEHDIR
DE RUEHDO #0244/01 0911311
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
P 311311Z MAR 08
FM AMEMBASSY DOHA
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7745
INFO RUEHZM/GULF COOPERATION COUNCIL COLLECTIVE

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 03 DOHA 000244

SIPDIS

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STATE FOR G/TIP, NEA/ARP, NEA/RA

E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: [PHUM](#) [PREL](#) [PREF](#) [KCRM](#) [KWMN](#) [SMIG](#) [KFRD](#) [ELAB](#) [QA](#)
SUBJECT: QATAR: ADDITIONAL INPUT FOR THE EIGHTH ANNUAL
TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS (TIP) REPORT

REF: A. DOHA 172
[B](#). DOHA 171
[C](#). STATE 2731

[1](#)1. (U) The information below, which Post either received in the past week from the Qatar National Office for Combating Trafficking in Humans (TIP Office) or otherwise just became available, details additional efforts to combat trafficking in persons (TIP) in Qatar during the reporting period for the 2008 TIP Report for Qatar. Additional information includes cases assisted by the TIP Office, referral of at least one case to the Public Prosecution, movement on passage of relevant laws, a request for legal assistance, and public recommendations from a recent TIP conference in Qatar. We recommend evaluation of this material for possible inclusion in the 2008 report.

Cases Accommodated in the TIP Shelter

[1](#)2. (U) Since its establishment, the following cases have been accommodated in Qatari House for Lodging and Humanitarian Care (TIP Shelter):

- Four Vietnamese referred by the Vietnamese Embassy. They were sheltered until their disputes with their sponsor was settled, after which they were repatriated. (Embassy Note: The Vietnamese Embassy only very recently opened in Qatar. It is likely the workers were referred by resident Vietnamese diplomats or other nationals.)
- Four Nepalese were sheltered. They came directly to the shelter for assistance after they sued their liquidated company. The TIP Office assisted them, in coordination with the Ministry of Interior (MOI), to transfer the sponsorship of three of the workers to another company; the fourth was repatriated in accordance with his wishes.
- Two Moroccans referred by the Qatar National Human Rights Committee (NHRC) were sheltered as a result of their dispute with their sponsor over unpaid wages.
- One Egyptian who sought the assistance of the TIP Office as a result of being abused by his company and for non-payment of wages.

----- Assistance to Victims Not Accommodated at the TIP Shelter -----

[1](#)3. (U) Additionally, the TIP Office assisted the following cases that were not accommodated at the TIP Shelter because accommodations were not needed:

- One Moroccan whose company turned out to be a sham. His sponsorship was transferred to another company in coordination with the MOI. According to the TIP Office, this case has been transferred to the Public Prosecution as "fraudulent recruitment."

- The TIP Office facilitated the sponsorship of a Syrian laborer after his company demanded payment in return for sponsorship transfer.

- The TIP Office assisted the settlement of a dispute between four Ghanaian laborers and their company in cooperation with the Labor Department.

Additional Efforts by the TIP Office

¶4. (U) The following highlights additional efforts by the TIP Office during the reporting period:

- Based on a recommendation by the TIP Office, the number of labor courts was increased from three to four.

- Based on a recommendation by the TIP Office, new procedures are in place between the courts and the Supreme Judicial Council whereby the courts must submit a monthly list of companies found to have violated the Labor Law and those that have been convicted in the courts.

- An agreement was signed between the TIP Office and the Search and Follow-up Department of the MOI (responsible for the deportation of foreigners) to refer domestic workers and women with children to the TIP Shelter until repatriation.

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Based on the agreement, four Indonesian domestic workers and their children (three girls and one boy) were housed at the shelter.

- A letter was issued February 1, 2008 to the Director General of Public Security, MOI, to circulate the terms and conditions for accommodation in the TIP Shelter to all Public Security departments. Since that time, the TIP Shelter has received 12 female domestic workers.

Movement on Laws

¶5. (U) A draft law "organizing the entry and exit of foreigners, their residence and sponsorship" and another protecting the rights of domestic workers were approved March 26 and were sent to the Advisory Council - the last step before forwarding to the Amir for enactment.

Human Trafficking Conference and Recommendations

¶6. (U) A conference entitled, "The 1st Scientific Conference on Human Trafficking - Between Theory and Practice," was held in Doha March 12-13. The conference was organized by the National TIP Office and Qatar University. The well-attended conference attracted attendees and speakers from inside and outside of Qatar, including the Arab League, Johns Hopkins University (The Protection Project), UNICEF, UNODC, Alexandria University, University of Tunisia, Al-Jazeera Satellite Network, Qatari Police Training Institute, UAE Societal Police Department, Qatari Attorney General's Office, Human Rights Department of the Qatari MOI, Qatar University Law Faculty, and the Qatar National TIP Office.

¶7. (U) During the conference, speakers recognized and spoke openly that people subjected to human trafficking are clearly victims and that they are recruited using coercion,

deception, fraud, and sometimes abuse of power. Many of the speakers called for enactment of an anti-TIP law in Qatar that conforms to international criteria, protects victims against punishment, allows victims to stay in the country, and concentrate, most importantly, on means of prevention. Mohammed Mattar from Johns Hopkins University noted that he had reviewed the draft TIP law for Qatar and had found it to be in accordance with international standards.

18. (U) One of the panels included the influential Egyptian-born Islamic cleric Sheikh Yusuf Al-Qaradawi who talked strongly against TIP, in all its forms, as an affront to Islam. He included examples of forced labor, sexual exploitation, and domestic worker abuse in his discussion. Al-Qaradawi clearly stated that the current sponsorship system in Qatar must be reviewed because as is it constitutes modern-day slavery in its present form.

19. (U) The conference committee issued the following recommendations at the close of the conference:

- TIP is recognized as an ethical, social, security and health problem with multiple dimensions and effects.
- The necessity to study and analyze the reasons and fundamental causes that lead people to fall victim to TIP.
- Each (GCC) country should establish an integrated information and database system for tracking TIP actions. Such systems should include legislation combating TIP, information of interest to criminal justice authorities, and types of assistance provided by the government to TIP victims. The resulting information should be accessible to researchers and decision makers.
- Establish integrated criteria for observing all forms of TIP that can be used for the preparation of TIP reports.
- Establish an Arab and regional network, under the supervision of the Arab League, for the exchange of information and experiences related to combating all forms of TIP.
- Increase societal awareness for combating TIP through educational establishments, mass media, civil society organizations, and religious organizations.
- Integrate TIP into the general and university education curricula.

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- Encourage research and specialized studies in the field of combating TIP.
- Establish government-sponsored shelters for the rehabilitation and care of TIP victims.
- Adopt training programs focused on upgrading the capabilities of law-enforcement personnel, civil society organizations, anti-TIP establishments, and the mass media. Make use of the UN Training and Documentation facilities in the field of human rights for the Southeast Asia and Arab region.
- Review and reform national legislation and definitions of TIP behaviors to conform to international criteria and conventions.
- Call upon the Arab League to expedite the issuance of a pilot integrated and comprehensive Arab convention for combating all forms of TIP and the reinforcement of Arab cooperation in the field of combating TIP.
- Call upon the GCC Secretary-General to take the lead in coordination and cooperation for the promotion of TIP combat

procedures between states in the region.

- Call on each Arab country to issue an annual TIP report.

Call for Judicial Assistance

¶10. (SBU) During a meeting at the Ministry of Justice with representatives from the American Bar Association (ABA) March 25, the Undersecretary of Justice, Sultan Al-Suwaidi, asked for assistance in investigating and prosecuting what he called "white-collar" crimes, including TIP. He noted that Qatar has laws on the books to combat such crimes, but that the legal system does not know how to use the laws. The ABA agreed to develop a proposal for the ministry.

Comments

¶11. (SBU) While much of this new information, received long after we submitted reftels A and B, continues to be more rhetorical than concrete, there have been appreciable advances. Never before has there been such public acknowledgement of TIP crimes in Qatar, especially among the large unskilled and low-skilled labor population. Over the last three years, emphasis has moved rightly so from children (camel jockeys), to female domestic workers, to laborers. Post recommends evaluation of this material for inclusion in the 2008 report and possible effect on Tier ranking.
RATNEY